

What is **MARXISM** all about?



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Introduction

The terms "socialism," "imperialism," "exploitation," etc., are thrown around loosely in the press by politicians and bosses. But these terms have special and definite meanings to Marxists. The Marxist definitions of these words help to sharpen an understanding of society from a *class* point of view.

This book is based on a series of articles that appeared in *Workers World* newspaper in 1974 and 1975 entitled "What We Mean By." Each chapter explains and illustrates a Marxist term in non-technical language. We hope the book will serve as an introduction to the most crucial and controversial ideas of our times and awaken the reader's interest in further reading of the Marxist classics.

We would like to thank the following *Workers World* newspaper staff writers who contributed the original articles that made this book possible: Lorraine Breslow, Naomi Cohen, Bill Del Vecchio, Bob Dobrow, Deirdre Griswold, Bob McCubbin, Elizabeth Ross, Sharon Shelton, and Andy Stapp. The articles were compiled and edited by Naomi Cohen and Bill Del Vecchio. Tom WW contributed the artwork.



The Working Class

If you have been laid off or work part time, are you a member of the working class? What about if you've never had the chance to get a job? Or if you're a housewife or the child of an employed or unemployed worker?

The working class includes the people who create all the goods and services in capitalist society. Workers are people who have no other means of earning a living except by working for someone else. This class we call the *proletariat*.

The bosses, or capitalists, own the factories, buildings, machinery, raw materials, and land, all of which are necessary for production. They live off the labor of the workers. The workers and their dependents own nothing but their personal goods and live by selling their labor to the capitalists.

But you don't have to have a job to consider yourself part of the working class. Those who are unemployed are also workers—workers who have been deprived of jobs by the bosses. Unemployed workers live off social services, unemployment insurance, or welfare benefits. In spite of the fact that the bosses are always crying over “lazy people who don't want to work,” unemployment is a constant and necessary feature of capitalism. For one thing, it helps keep wages down by scaring workers into

submission. For another thing, unemployed, part-time, and seasonal workers are kept in a service pool by the bosses for when they want to expand their industries.

Housewives and children of employed and unemployed workers are also part of the working class. Housewives are unpaid laborers, doing domestic work, including the raising of the next generation of workers. Children are workers' dependents who are being brought up and trained to be future workers.

The working class is an international class. Although divided into different countries because of past and present capitalist rule, it stretches all over the world. It is a class that cuts across both oppressor and oppressed nationalities, across Black, Asian, Latin, and white. It is composed of men and women, straight and gay, young and old, skilled and unskilled, organized and unorganized, employed and unemployed.

In short, the working class is those who produce all the wealth in society.

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The Ruling Class

How do you know who is a member of the ruling class in this society? Does it include the foreman who rides herd on you all day? Or is it composed of people higher up, like the plant manager who stays hidden in his office all day as he directs production?

No, the ruling class hardly goes near its property these days. In fact, it hasn't really run its own businesses for the past 100 years! The ruling class, which we call the *bourgeoisie*, is made up of a handful of billionaire parasites, who use the profits they steal from the workers' labor and use that money to further increase their own power. The foreman, plant manager, policeman, judge, newspaper editor, and politician are all the hired agents of the ruling class. (Sometimes a member of the bourgeoisie will take on one of these jobs when they don't feel they can trust anyone else, like Nelson Rockefeller, for example.)

The ruling class is the tiny minority who own the machines, the plants, the offices, the trucks and trains, and the raw materials that are necessary for production. All these materials and equipment are called the *means of production*.

By owning the means of production, the capitalist is able to control almost everything in society. The worker must work for

the capitalist or starve. The writer for the news media must write what the bosses want to hear, or his article doesn't get printed. The government is completely interconnected with the ruling class, since politicians and judges are either paid agents of the ruling class (corporation lawyers like Nixon), or members of the class itself (Rockefeller).

Only a relatively small portion of the capitalists' money is used for personal luxuries such as mansions, servants, yachts, and Rolls Royces. For them the function of money is to increase their power. The profits from one business are immediately used to increase the means of production. The money reinvested to make more money is called *capital*. Each capitalist must turn his money into capital or else be ruined by a competitor.

Vast amounts of wealth have been concentrated into the hands of the U.S., the core of the master class comprises a much smaller group. *Fortune* magazine lists 84 families that have over \$100 million in personal assets. Twelve of these families, the Rockefellers, DuPonts, Mellons, Fords, Dorrances, Pews, Gettys, Hugheses, Cullens, Hunts, Ludwigs, and MacArthurs, has personal assets of \$1 billion or more!



Capitalism

The bosses like to call it "free enterprise." But for the millions locked into hard, boring jobs with no relief except unemployment, the present system is neither free nor enterprising. What makes capitalism tick—and why does it so often leave the masses with a choice of war or depression?

Capitalism, like feudalism and slavery before it, is a society divided into classes where a few fabulously rich parasites are supported by the sweat and labor of vast number of toiling and oppressed people.

But capitalism is also very different from earlier forms of class society. For one thing, the laborers are legally "free." They are not owned outright as chattel slaves, nor are they bound to the land as serfs. Their labor is *sold* to the owners of capital (called the capitalists, the bosses, or the bourgeoisie) in a new and concealed form of bondage—wage slavery. The boss, who buys the workers' labor power in exchange for wages, always pays the workers *less* than the value they have added to the finished product. The difference is surplus value, from which the boss extracts his profits.

This basic mechanism of capitalist production means that the workers are *never* paid enough to buy back all the products

they make—and this is the root cause of the crisis of “over-production,” when, even though people need the goods, they cannot afford to buy them and the system goes into a tailspin.

Capitalism has been very dynamic in developing the means of production, however. Unlike feudalism, where the land owned by the lord or king was used to produce mainly what the nobleman and his court could consume themselves (with a bare subsistence going to the peasants), capitalist production is mainly for exchange. This means finding markets to buy what is produced. Capitalist competition for markets means that every effort is made to increase production and make it more efficient—most often at the direct expense of the workers themselves, who are exploited at an intensity and efficiency unknown under earlier systems.

This drive for efficiency in order to gain a competitive edge has led to a greater and greater concentration of production under the control of giant enterprises. Increasingly, corporations emerge that employ thousands of workers and control every step in the production of goods from extracting the raw materials to delivering the finished product. In this way production becomes more and more *socialized*.

The development of capitalism has also produced the force that must overthrow it—the modern working class or proletariat. Hundreds and thousands of workers are now brought together to labor cooperatively, often under the same roof.

But this *social* character of work and production is completely at odds with the *individual* ownership of production. There is a constant struggle going on between the workers and the bosses over the division of surplus value, with the workers—Black and white, men and women, gay and straight—trying to raise their standard of living and the bosses trying to maximize their profits.

Capitalist efficiency, too, exists only *within* each corporate enterprise. Taken as a whole, the system is horribly *inefficient*, with millions of worker-hours being poured into parasitic industries like armaments and advertising. There is duplication and waste of effort because of secrecy and competition (patents, for example, and 40 different brands of toothpaste).

Moreover, as the world economy becomes more complex, it becomes ever clearer that humanity must *plan* production to use raw materials wisely and keep the earth beautiful and habitable.

But overall planning is impossible under capitalism; production is geared to making profits, and every other consideration is sacrificed to this underlying motive. Also, capitalist rivalries and need for markets inevitably lead to war, which is the greatest destroyer and polluter of all and threatens the very foundations of life on this planet.

But capitalism as a world system is on the way out. Already 35 percent of the world's people have expropriated the means of production and have socialized the ownership of the productive property. It is inevitable that in the rest of the world, which includes most highly developed capitalist countries—the U.S., Western Europe, and Japan—the class that produces everything will rise to assume control over society's destiny.



Exploitation

Everybody who works for a boss is exploited. If the boss couldn't exploit you, he wouldn't hire you.

During every workday, in every factory, office, mine, or field, anybody who works for a boss is exploited.

No workers receive enough wages from their jobs to buy back the products they have made. They create a surplus which goes into the pockets of the capitalist who employs them.

Where workers have built strong unions they can wrest from the capitalists more of the surplus than they could get if no unions existed, but as long as the capitalist system lasts the workers can never thoroughly wipe out the bosses' surplus or end exploitation.

Workers and capitalists are in constant struggle over the division of this surplus, but the capitalist holds the highest cards because the worker is dependent upon him merely to stay alive. In times of mass unemployment workers' wages are driven down and the degree of exploitation rises.

Throughout the 7,000 or more years of class society, exploitation took different forms. Slavery, which employed the chain and the lash, was only too visibly exploitative. Under feudalism the serf knew very well how much he was exploited. When he and his whole family worked 3 or 4 days of every week

on the lord's ample fields and the rest of the week on their own small plots to eke out a meagre living, they could easily measure the degree of their exploitation.

But under capitalism it is indirect and hidden from most workers, who can't see how the system operates. The low-paid typist or file clerk, the ditchdigger or cafeteria dishwasher, are brainwashed to believe that incompetence is the source of their low wages. However, even the relatively high-paid construction worker, though he may not realize it, is still exploited because he adds more value to the buildings he works on than he receives for his labor.

But simple exploitation is not enough for the capitalist class. The capitalist is driven by the contradictions inherent in his own system to look for fields of *super-exploitation*.

Whenever he has enough capital he moves his plants to areas where workers are more desperate and must work for lower pay—to the southern states of the U.S., to Latin America, Africa, Indonesia, south Korea, Malaysia. The practice of paying especially low wages to workers in colonial countries is called *super-exploitation*.

That he cannot exploit the workers of the socialist countries is one of the greatest reasons for his hatred of them. The potential for super-exploitation has been shrinking ever since the Russian Revolution of 1917.

The primary reason the U.S. waged two disastrous wars in Korea and Vietnam was to wrench those two key areas of Asia out of the socialist orbit and bring their millions of working people back into the field of capitalist exploitation.



Capital

Capital, says the capitalist, is money used in the production of more money.

The teachers of capitalist political economy put it more "scientifically." They explain that capital is factories, machinery, raw materials, and money to pay wages—the last named being in reality the means of subsistence for the wage slaves.

But these things are only capital and only command a return for the capitalist under a certain kind of social system.

For instance, the existence of Black workers and fertile lands in the South a century ago did not create the wealthy slave masters. Only a social system could do that. Only the social recognition of slavery with laws, customs, chains, prisons, and executioners could maintain the slave system.

And the massive machinery and other means of production in existence today do not in themselves equal capital. They are only the *form* of capital.

The essence of capital is its social relation to the worker. The insane domination of the means of production over the producer (the worker) is only possible because of history and because of customs, culture (brainwashing), courts, and prisons which all dictate that this be so.

Consider the billions and billions of dollars worth of Rockefeller capital.

There are not enough one-dollar bills in existence to equal the value of the corporations the Rockefellers own or control. But dollars are only the name of the game. They are not the game itself.

In reality the Rockefeller corporations are a tremendous aggregation of the crystallized labor of millions and millions of people over the past 114 years (i.e., since the original Rockefeller went into the oil business). In reality, they even represent stored-up human labor from centuries earlier, too.

The Rockefellers' legal possession of all this material gives them the right to do as they like with it. And they like profits.

Thus the achievements, sweat, blood, tears, and daily grind of the living, and practically all the stored-up production of the dead—dead labor, so to speak—are used to enslave the living laborers today.

In the words of Karl Marx, "Capital is dead labor which lives, vampire-like, from the blood of living labor. . . . It is only the domination of accumulated, past, materialized labor over direct, living labor that turns accumulated labor into capital."

In a rational world the living laborer would be the master of the dead labor of the past. In a socialist society, instead of being the appendages of the machine as they are now, the working people would have machines for *their* appendages—that is, for their increased interest in the work process and infinitely increased enjoyment of the fruits of their work.

Capital, then, would no longer be capital—the possession of the capitalist. It would be transformed or reborn into its true form and essence—the accomplishments and creation of the whole human race being used by the human race and for the human race.



Private Property

Private property, to a communist, is not your toothbrush, your shirt, or even your house.

Those things are *personal property* and under socialism and communism they will belong to you in the same way as your fingernails do.

When we speak of *private property* under capitalism, we mean the tools of production that should be owned by all of society. We mean factories, lands, mills, mines—all those things that are the gift of nature or have been built by many people over many centuries, but are now monopolized by a few. These few don't give a hoot in hell how many years of human labor went into their creation, just so long as they alone can reap profits from the legal ownership of that property.

The goal of socialism is to abolish private property but increase personal property many times over.

Enemies of communism say that communists want to take little farms away from the men and women who worked so hard to keep them going for so many years, and put the little grocers, shoemakers, tailors, and carpenters out of business—make them work for the state, where they will no longer be independent and live in the hope of some day making millions.

Nonsense! It is capitalism that put most of them out of business years ago and made wage slaves of them, destroying their dreams of wealth or even lasting prosperity.

It is capitalism in the form of giant agribusiness that mows down thousands of small farms every week. It is capitalism in the form of supermarkets that has wiped out nearly all the corner grocers; it is capitalism in the form of huge shoe, dress, suit, and all clothing conglomerates that has put the little independent shoemakers and tailors out of business. The few who remain live precariously on the edge of an abyss, with whole families working long hours to "stay in business."

How many carpenters are there who can earn enough as small businessmen on their own to support a family? The big-time contractors have demolished them as independent producers. The manufacturers of prefabricated houses or furniture that comes out of the factory like strings of sausages have made the ancient trade of carpentry all but useless.

Private property in the means of production is owned by a very small fraction of the population in the capitalist countries, but it was produced by generations of working people—by the immense majority who over the centuries learned to till the soil, mine the ores, and make buildings and bridges out of trees, rock, clay, and new combinations of nature's bounty.

In the earliest days of capitalist accumulation there were, here and there, some people who amassed relatively small private properties through hard work and miserly living. But most properties, even then, were gained through influence, bribery, and deceit—by robbing the poor of their labor. But it is laughable to think that anyone or any family could have *earned* a billion dollars—or even a million, stringent though their life-style might be.

Now, one-third of the human race has overthrown the system of private property. Personal property—homes, nourishing food, cameras, bicycles, books, and the thousand small items that raise the cultural level of a people—increase year by year in the socialist countries, but no one can personally own the land, the factories, or the mills.

Personal property has increased in the capitalist world, too: vast estates, mansions, yachts, private planes, mink coats, jewels—all are hoarded by the few, while the personal property

of the many decreases, has become shoddier, wears out more quickly, or is repossessed before payments are completed.

In the struggle to secure personal property—the necessities and comforts of life—the working class will find it necessary to overthrow the institution of private property and put all the means of production under the control of a workers' government.



The Class Struggle

Workers and bosses are in continual conflict all over the capitalist world. Whether it's individual disputes on the job, strikes involving the organization of many workers, or the many social struggles that come from the division of society into rich and poor, the battle between the working class and the capitalist class can never be resolved by either reforms or repression.

What is the driving force of this struggle? It is the fact that workers produce more than they are compensated for—Marxists call this *surplus value*—and there is a constant tug-of-war between the bosses and the workers over this surplus. Workers need it to raise their standard of living above mere subsistence. Bosses need it to increase their profits.

It's in the interests of the bosses to keep wages low and prices and productivity high. These conditions maximize profits, allowing them to both expand and attract new capital. If they fail to do this, they are swallowed up by bigger, more profitable capitalist enterprises.

But for the workers, low wages and high prices mean hardship and sacrifices. High productivity usually means working harder and faster for the same pay.

Decent housing, transportation, wholesome food, and other basic human needs are of no concern to the capitalist rulers

unless there is a buck to be made. Working people are forced to fight a continuing battle just to hold the line against the deteriorating conditions of their lives.

As long as there is capitalism, the gains won by the working class in periods of struggle will be attacked by the capitalists as soon as there is a lull or a general crisis. In this country, we are today experiencing a period in which the wage gains won over years of trade union struggles are being undermined and close to wiped out by inflation—which itself is the result of conscious economic policies of the capitalist government, such as the devaluation of the dollar.

This attack on the living standards of the workers is bound to intensify the class struggle. Already there has been a significant increase in the number of strikes—a basic form of the class struggle.

But strikes for economic demands alone do not go to the root of the problem. It is when the separate sections of the working class unite to struggle in defense of their general class interests against both the bosses and their political weapon, the bourgeois state, that a general strike can take on the character of a political challenge to the whole boss class.

The class struggle is fundamental to the relations between the workers and the bosses of any particular capitalist country. But it is also global in character, and is the most basic element in the relations between the capitalist countries and the workers' states. Our class allies are all the workers of the world, the socialist states, and the liberation movements of the colonized countries.



Class Solidarity

When we speak or write about proletarian solidarity, working class solidarity, and international solidarity, we mean the complete unity of interest of all the peoples oppressed and exploited by capitalism. It is only by combining together in solidarity, it is only through closing ranks against the common enemy, that any victory has ever been won by the masses of people.

Working class solidarity is present in every strike, when a picket line is set up. Only a scab or a boss will cross this line, while all workers who feel solidarity with each other refuse. Workers formed trade unions and continue to organize into unions today out of knowledge that only through banding together in solidarity can even the slightest improvement be gained in working conditions, wages, job security, and so forth.

The bosses attempt to break up and destroy working class solidarity by dividing the poor and working people against each other. They attempt to turn men against women workers, white against nonwhite, straight against gay, "Americans" against "foreigners."

Nonetheless, the solidarity of the world working class and oppressed peoples has often defeated the attempts of the capitalist to trick working people into fighting against one another.

U.S. workers have shown solidarity with the African peoples living in the fascist settler states of Rhodesia and South Africa by refusing to unload coal and chrome produced in those countries by virtual slave labor. Similarly, Australian longshoremen refused to unload U.S. ships during the terror bombing of Hanoi and Japanese workers wouldn't handle scab cargo from the U.S. during the longshore strike here a few years ago.

The boycott of scab grapes and lettuce by millions of Americans who support the Farmworkers Union is an act of working class solidarity.

Real working class solidarity can only be achieved and real unity won when solidarity is based on the rights of equality of all. This means, for example, that male workers must fight for equal rights for women and whites for the equality of Black and Brown.

The greatest act of working class solidarity is the world socialist revolution itself, a revolution that has already begun and that will ultimately wipe out all oppression.



Imperialism

Capitalism must expand or die. When the capitalists of a particular country are compelled to expand beyond their own borders militarily and economically, this is called imperialism—the highest and last stage of capitalism.

What is it that forces the capitalist system to become imperialist?

At a certain stage in the development of capitalism, production becomes concentrated in the hands of a few giant monopolies. These powerful corporations, which are dominated by a few banks, take control of the economic life of society. Such financial groupings both collaborate (e.g., price fixing) and compete with one another for greater control of society's wealth. In order to survive, they must constantly amass ever-greater profits, which means exploiting the labor of the working class even more intensively, since labor is the source of all value.

But the more the capitalists are driven to produce and sell for profit, the more evident it becomes that the workers cannot buy all these products back, because they are paid only a small portion of the value of what they make. Therefore the capitalists are compelled to look beyond their own country for markets around the world in which they can sell their "surplus" product.

They are also on the lookout for the highest return on their investment, which they can easily reap by exploiting cheap foreign labor. This leads to the massive export of capital and the development of a global network of corporate control and investment. Through the export of capital the imperialists seize control of the world's natural resources, such as oil, tin, coffee, rubber, bauxite, cotton.

To protect their overseas investments, the imperialists raise huge armies and navies, not only to forcibly subjugate oppressed people seeking independence from foreign domination, but to make war against other imperialist countries competing for control. World War I and World War II are examples of two such inter-imperialist rivalries, where whole portions of the world were carved up among the major imperialist powers in Europe, Japan, and the United States.

But World War II signaled a turning point in world imperialist relations. After 6 years of global slaughter which took 50 million lives, the United States emerged as the world's most powerful imperialist country, gaining control of former European empires in Asia and Africa. The U.S., which had become an imperialist power in 1898, had already gained control of Latin America by the end of World War I.

Today the U.S. has over \$300 billion invested overseas, protected by half a million Pentagon troops. Some countries occupied by U.S. imperialism are out-and-out colonies, like Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam. Others are run by puppet regimes such as in south Korea, Chile, and the Philippines. But whatever the form of government, the results are the same. The oppressed nation remains a one-crop or one-mineral "underdeveloped" economy, its riches systematically pumped out to fill the vaults of the big U.S. banking institutions.

These banks, which stand at the pinnacle of imperialism, have their branch offices from Bangkok to Beirut, from Buenos Aires to Bombay. The Chase Manhattan Bank alone has 1,400 branches in Africa.

But as mighty as U.S. imperialism seems, it is already past its peak and has started to decline. The decisive turning point was its defeat by the heroic Vietnamese people, a defeat that ended the historic 70-year era of U.S. global expansion.

Imperialism is the enemy of all working people whether they live in an imperialist country or in the country victimized by it. But it is the special obligation of the workers in the exploiting country to give support to those fighting to rid their country from super-exploitation and foreign domination.



Oppressed Nations

In an open colonial relationship, it is easy to recognize an oppressed nation. The Irish people, for example, have been oppressed by England for centuries and during most of that time denied the rights of nationhood.

Generally, oppressed nations have consisted of people sharing a common language, territory, and culture, and a *common oppression*. Thus, in Bangladesh, not only did the first three characteristics apply, but the standard of living was less than half that in Pakistan and the Pakistani government was made up almost entirely of people from the West (Bangladesh was then called East Pakistan), even though the majority of the people lived in the East.

Imperialism, however, has complicated the definition of an oppressed nation by moving whole peoples from their original geographical locations and breaking down language and cultural differences.

In the United States, although a general homogeneity has been reached in language and culture, there are still *oppressed nations* consisting of people who are systematically singled out for oppression, regardless of where they live, because of their ethnic and historical backgrounds.

Thus we say that the United States today is multi-national, with a dominant white nation alongside and intermingled with a number of oppressed national groupings, including the Black, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Asian, and Native American peoples.

The working class too is multi-national. At the factories and in the shops workers of different nations work side by side. But the entire working class is exploited by the same capitalist class—the bankers, the big farmers or agribusinesses, the industrialists, and the landlords. And this capitalist class belongs almost exclusively to the dominant white nation.

How did it come to be this way? Why did people coming to the U.S. from different European nations in the early days become assimilated, while those who originally inhabited this continent, those forcibly brought from Africa, and others have remained oppressed?

The European immigrants to North America, while some were rich and some poor, were gradually assimilated, their national differences (though not necessarily their *class* differences) breaking down to where they now constitute a nation in themselves. The majority of them chose to come to the U.S. because of economic and political conditions in their own countries.

But as American capitalism developed and the colonies won their independence, the U.S. through military expansionist wars forcibly conquered other nations and nationalities and took them over. The American Indian nations, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and the nation of Aztlan are a few examples.

In addition, both before and after the American Revolution, entire peoples were uprooted from their African homelands and kidnapped to the U.S. through the slave trade.

All these different oppressed nations and nationalities have been retained within the boundaries of the U.S., their lands stolen and plundered of natural resources, their people used as a source of cheap labor. Because of slavery and imperialist intervention, they were prevented from developing as independent nations. Nor have they received the protection of the democratic rights supposedly granted by the U.S. Constitution.

In reality these oppressed people are internal colonies of the U.S. ruling class.

The capitalist ruling class has deliberately fostered divisions between the white workers and the oppressed peoples. This

divide-and-conquer tactic means denying oppressed people their democratic rights, miseducating the whites and attempting to brainwash them with racist ideas, blaming nonwhites for the evils of capitalism, not allowing assimilation between white and nonwhite on the basis of equality, giving white workers a few extra crumbs (while still exploiting their labor intensively), and creating a system of racism and national oppression based on super-exploitation, inequality, and prejudice.



Self-determination

All workers, be they black, brown, white, red, or yellow, have the same class interests. They all need to eliminate capitalist exploitation and replace the rule of the bosses with the rule of the workers (socialism).

It is clear that this tremendous task can't be achieved without the closest possible unity and trust among all workers. But when one or several sections of the working class are oppressed over and above the class as a whole, when in fact they belong to a people who constitute an *oppressed nation*, then the problems of unity are complicated.

Racism and national oppression are tools of the bosses. They divide the workers by making the more privileged group feel it is in their interests to go along with the terrible conditions imposed on the oppressed. The result is that *all* the workers suffer, but the oppressed group suffer by far the most. As an example, wages and conditions for *all* workers in Alabama average out to the lowest in the country. But of course the Black workers are much worse off than the whites, who are thereby blinded to the fact that they too could be getting much more out of the bosses.

The kind of solidarity that is needed to fight the bosses in the days ahead can only be built up through a struggle to break down the racism and inequality dividing the workers. The white

workers must show by their actions that they will fight to extend to the oppressed people all the rights and benefits they already have.

But national oppression is not confined to the workplace. It is not expressed merely in lower wages and worse jobs. An oppressed nation is subject to humiliation, deprivation, scorn, and repression in every area of social life. Therefore, much of their struggle is a political one to achieve democratic rights denied them. The struggle may also take the form of seeking a separate state, if the oppressed people feel that assimilation on an equal basis with the dominant nation is impossible.

Communists, or revolutionary socialists, beginning with Karl Marx, have always supported the right of oppressed nations to self-determination at the same time that they endeavored to unite the workers of all nationalities into a common fighting party of the working class.

Being for the right of self-determination means supporting the oppressed people in whatever choice they may make about the kind of political form that best suits their historical circumstances. This could be a federation of their national states with others; they might choose to form an autonomous region; they might feel that assimilation into the dominant nation with full equality can best serve their interests. Or they might want to establish a separate independent state of their own.

In the U.S. today, only the dominant white nation has a state of its own, and this is run by the billionaires. But the Black, Native American, Chicano, and other oppressed nations don't even have a state in which the wealthy of their nation run things, let alone a state run by the workers. They are systematically denied political power at all levels.

For white workers to understand the right of self-determination doesn't mean they should *advocate* separation, any more than it means that they should abandon the struggle to win over backward whites who want to exclude Blacks and other oppressed peoples from their schools, neighborhoods, etc., out of racism.

It is by supporting both the right of self-determination and the struggle for equality that white workers can help break down the racism that has divided our class and bring closer the day when all workers can cooperate in the struggle to tear down capitalist exploitation and oppression.



Women's Oppression

One doesn't have to look far to discover the concrete ways in which women are oppressed under capitalist society. The fact that women earn, on an average, about 40 percent less than men—with Black, Latin, and other Third World women earning even less—in itself speaks volumes about the special oppression of women. However, equal pay for equal work alone would not end centuries-old discrimination women have suffered.

There are literally hundreds of demands that have been raised by fighters for women's liberation; including free 24-hour, community-controlled day care, proper health care, maternity benefits, and control over our own bodies—which includes the right of abortion and protection from forced sterilization, as well as the right to bear children in a society that will see to it that they are fed, clothed, and educated in the best way possible. In addition, women have fought against the degrading stereotypes of us that pervade this culture, and indoctrinate women to feel weak, dependent, and incapable by comparison with men.

How did women come to be oppressed and how can we overcome this second-class status? Over 100 years ago, Marx and Engels began to tackle the question of the origins of women's oppression. Unlike some feminists, who hold that women have

always been oppressed by men, Marxists point out that during the greater part of human history, women were not oppressed. They lived and worked in the ancient communal societies in an equal relationship with men.

While the social roles women and men played (called the division of labor) might have been different, there was no caste system implying inferiority or superiority because of these different roles. Anthropological studies of the vestiges of such societies among tribes in Asia, Africa, the islands of the Pacific and among Native Americans attest to the remnants of this civil egalitarianism still in existence.

Marxists have utilized such anthropological data to show that the oppression of women was not a natural outgrowth of the relations between men and women. Something else must have intervened to smash the old equality of the sexes.

What happened to change this egalitarianism? And when did the change take place?

It came about when the ancient societies based on communal property developed into class societies based on private property. This did not happen overnight, nor even in a century, but developed gradually as the division of labor between men and women turned into a division between those who possessed private property and those who did not. Women began to be regarded as objects for child bearing, as private property, only when private property itself emerged—which was only about 7,000 years ago.

Through the centuries of class rule, women's oppression has varied from place to place and from era to era, but in all forms of class societies based on private property, whether it was slavery, feudalism, or capitalism, women have been oppressed.

This is why Marxists say that it is the system of private property (which today takes the form of capitalism) that is the basis for women's oppression, not just the dominance of men over women. Therefore, only the abolition of private property itself will lay the basis for the complete emancipation of women.



Gay Oppression

Until very recent times, gay people, or homosexuals, were a mostly invisible minority. Very prejudicial and distorted ideas of what they were like were held by most people. Those who knew the truth—that gay people were pretty much like straight people except for the added oppression they suffered because of their sexual orientation—had the choice of remaining silent or becoming victims of the prejudice themselves.

When gay women and men fought back against police harassment in New York City in June 1969, it was a signal to gay people everywhere that the time had come to challenge the historic legacy of oppression. This momentous event, the Stonewall Rebellion, is commemorated every year by thousands of gay people with marches and rallies in many cities.

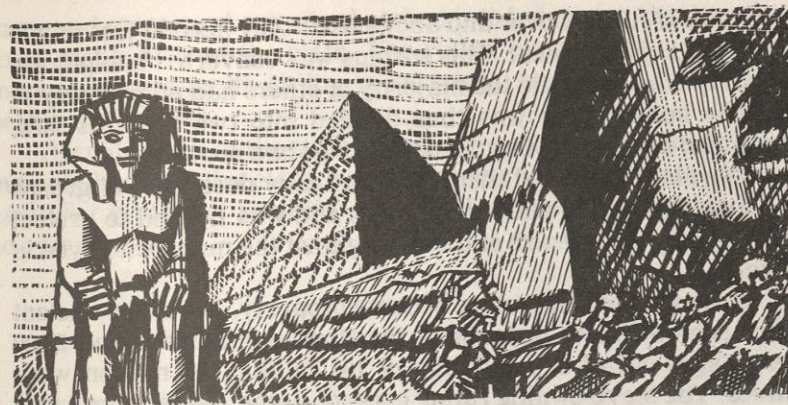
Since the Stonewall Rebellion gay people in large numbers have been fighting for an end to the discrimination they face in all areas of their lives. For example, in most states, acts of homosexual love are still illegal (as are heterosexual acts which don't lead to procreation!). Gay people are discriminated against by bosses and landlords. Gay men and women (especially transvestites) are sometimes physically attacked by bigots who know no cop will arrest them and no judge will convict them for "roughing up" a "degenerate." Lesbians with children often

have their right to raise these children challenged and sometimes the children are taken from them by a court merely because they are gay.

Gay people are also fighting the erroneous ideas about them that are still widely held. For example, homosexuality is not an illness. Anti-gay prejudice, it is true, has made some homosexually-inclined people mentally ill but the amazing thing is that so many gay people have been able to lead healthy and productive lives in spite of the constant harassment, the prejudice, and the pressure to hide their true selves behind a mask of heterosexuality.

It is also said that homosexuality is rare, that it only exists in big cities, or in capitalist societies, or in families that are abnormal in one way or another. All these assertions are contradicted by facts that show that many people have homosexual feelings to one extent or another, that homosexuality has existed in all societies, at all times, whether persecuted or not, and regardless of how a particular society was organized. (Through most of human existence the family as we know it today did not exist.)

All progressive people should speak out for the rights of gay people. In addition, we should understand how the capitalists make use of the widespread prejudice against gay people to hurt *all* working and oppressed people. It is one more way to divide us, to keep us fighting among ourselves instead of uniting to defeat our common enemy, the capitalists who exploit gay and straight alike.



How the State Arose

When we talk about the state we do not mean it in the sense of the state of Oregon or Louisiana or Rhode Island. By the state, we refer to the whole repressive apparatus of the government: the courts, the prisons, the police, and the military. As we all know, politicians (like Nixon) come and go, but the state seems eternal.

But is the state, whether it be in Italy, Brazil, Ethiopia, or the U.S., something that has always existed? No.

Scientists have proven that the human race has existed on earth for at least 4 million years. And yet the organization of society under the rule of the state is only about 6,000 years old. This is far less than 1 percent of the time humanity has existed! For millions of years, people lived in societies that had no state—no jails, cops, or armies. And unlike the violent picture created by “caveman” movies, people were generally peaceable, regulating disputes through social pressure.

Where then did the state come from? How did it arise from the older stateless societies?

The state first came about in different parts of the world around 4,000 B.C. when the people of the ancient societies, who had previously shared everything as a necessity for simple survival, developed production to a high enough point where

there was a *surplus* over and above what they needed just to live from one day to the next. This surplus was converted into private property of *some* while the majority of others had no property at all. The human race was thus divided into two great classes, those who owned property, and those who had none.

The state consisted then, as it basically does now, of groups of specially trained and armed men, and was needed to protect the property and wealth of the few against the many who lived in poverty.

Even people themselves became property, as in the ancient slave societies. For instance in the Roman Empire, about 2,000 years ago, out of a population of 100 million, 50 million were slaves. The slave-owning ruling class of Rome needed thousands of soldiers to put down slave revolts, like the famous rebellion led by Spartacus.

The Roman Empire, a typical slave state, collapsed in Europe about 500 A.D. and was eventually replaced by the feudal state. Here, wealth was based on the ownership of land where serfs toiled for the feudal lord. Serf uprisings were crushed by armies paid and equipped by the lords. Serfs were tried in the castle courtyard. We still use the word court today as a place for trial.

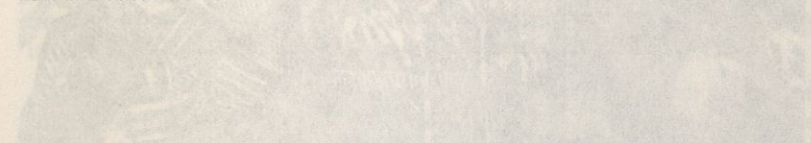
In the 17th century another class began to challenge the feudalists for power. This attack on the landed aristocrats came from the capitalist class, whose wealth was not based on land but on commerce and trade (and later on industry and banking). In one country after another the capitalists overthrew the feudal states all over Europe in bloody civil wars. They set up states that served their needs in a way the feudal states could not.

Over the last 400 years, the capitalist states in Europe and then America sent armies to subdue the people of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, where the capitalists saw the chance for huge profits for their investments. By the beginning of this century all the capitalist states had become imperialist. The people they colonized and conquered had lived in states that were either slave or feudal. Sometimes they were a modified combination of both. A few were still living in societies that had not developed a state, like some Native American peoples.

Imperialism has developed the state to the most monstrous proportions ever known. Larger and larger numbers of people spend their energies either in the military or the police, while

more and more workers are absorbed into industries that supply these institutions of the state. The ruling class resorts to force more and more as its ability to persuade, bribe, and cajole the people diminishes.

The naked fist of the state becomes more and more visible—but only because the class forces that oppose the state and the capitalist system it protects are growing in strength and consciousness.



SLA, at Altice where Rockefeller ordered a massacre that ended with 43 inmates and hostages dead.

In 1917 a completely new kind of state appeared in the world. The Russian Revolution created the first workers' state. Capitalism was abolished, just as slavery had been abolished in the United States. All wealth, except the tools of production, was made the common property of all the workers. The workers' state was the first step toward the abolition of the state. It was the first time that the workers' state had been established in the world.

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The State Today

We have shown how the state—the army, courts, cops, prisons, and tax collectors—arose about 6,000 years ago and how it has historically served the privileged classes of the slave owners, feudal lords, and, today, the capitalists.

The U.S. has developed the most expensive state in human history. The federal budget for the military alone exceeds \$100 billion a year, not counting the hidden budgets of paramilitary organizations like the CIA, or the cost of past wars in the form of military pensions and interest on the national debt. To this already enormous figure must be added the billions spent from the state and local treasuries on the police, prisons, and courts.

The purpose of this vast apparatus is to serve and protect the power of a handful of millionaires and billionaires who rule this country.

Isn't it obvious that the state always sides with the bosses? All of us know of the many times striking workers have been beaten and arrested by cops. Have you ever heard of cops clubbing and jailing a boss during a strike?

Isn't it a notorious fact that of thousands executed in the electric chairs and gas chambers of this nation, none have been wealthy? In fact 80 percent of the one million prisoners in this

country are Third World, and all but an insignificant handful are poor.

The state has become almost completely merged with the capitalist class itself, creating a virtual shuttle service of top executives between the board rooms of America's largest banks and industries and government "service." Dean Rusk changed hats from head of the Rockefeller Foundation to Secretary of State, McNamara moved from president of Ford Motors to Secretary of Defense, and Rockefeller himself has begun to step into the White House, the highest executive office of the state.

The ruthlessness of the capitalist state has been revealed many times in recent years—at Mylai, in Los Angeles where hundreds of cops attacked and burned alive five members of SLA, at Attica where Rockefeller ordered a massacre that ended with 43 inmates and hostages dead.

In 1917 a completely new kind of state appeared in the world. The Russian Revolution created the first workers' state. Capitalism was abolished, just as slavery and serfdom had been overthrown before. All wealth, except articles of personal property, was made the common property of all the workers. The overall economy was planned to meet human needs, not the profits of a few.

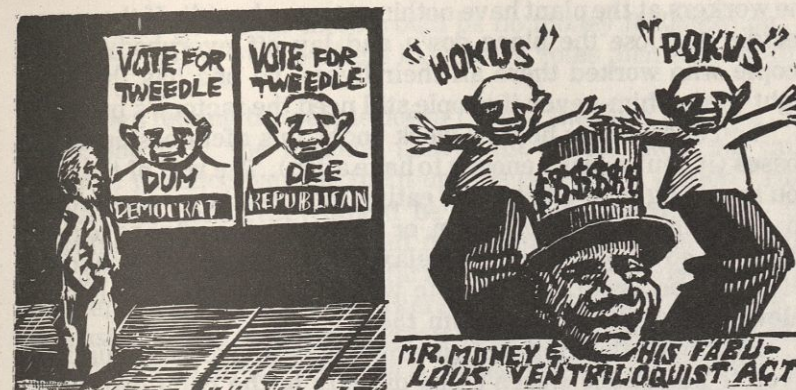
Despite its deficiencies, the Soviet state is in the historic interest of both the people of the USSR and the workers of the world as a whole.

Since 1917 there have been socialist revolutions in China, Cuba, Vietnam, and other countries.

We live in a time when capitalism's decline generates wars and revolutions. But capitalism is being replaced by a superior system, socialism. This will happen in the U.S., too, where everyone can see from the Watergate revelations that the capitalist regime is both completely corrupt and increasingly unstable.

The state has always been an instrument of dictatorship: of the slave owner over the slave, the feudal lord over the serf, the capitalist over the worker and colonized peoples. In the workers' states, however, it is the majority that rules over a minority of counter-revolutionary capitalists. And where the development of earlier societies sharpened the differences between the classes, the growth of socialism does away with all class antagonisms.

When the capitalists are overthrown all over the world, the state will begin to disappear. The world's wealth, produced abundantly by modern technology, will be shared in common. With the historic end of oppressed classes, the state, an instrument used to carry out their suppression, will be obsolete and the human race will return to its original stateless condition but on a far higher level.



Democracy

In this society we are told from our earliest days in school that we live in a democracy—"of the people, by the people, and for the people." The only "proof" of this we are given is that most government officials are elected—except for a few "unimportant" posts like Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, local police chiefs, etc. In between elections you can write a letter to your elected representatives. If they don't represent the views of the majority, we are told, next election time the majority can vote in somebody else. That's how the story goes.

But how does this work out in reality? Do the elected politicians really represent the majority of the people?

The majority of people in this society are members of the working class, yet only a tiny minority of the politicians were ever workers. Almost every single politician today represents the capitalist class, in one way or another. Some are wealthy capitalists themselves, like Vice-President Rockefeller or Ted Kennedy, and some are corporate lawyers and bribe takers, like ex-President Nixon.

When it comes to running the economy, everybody knows we live under a dictatorship of the capitalists. If the owner of a factory wants to make machine guns instead of sewing machines,

the workers at the plant have nothing to say about it. If the owner decides to close the place down and lay off everybody (even people who worked there all their lives), no one has the legal right to stop him—even if people still need the factory's product!

You spend forty hours a week under this dictatorship of the bosses (if you're lucky enough to have a job). The rest of the time you are using *their* electricity, eating the food *they* make money on, sleeping in houses *they* own, or paying on a mortgage to *their* bank. Even if you want to relax by watching your favorite television program, you have to watch *their* commercials on a television set you bought from *them*.

How could the capitalist government be above this situation? Even if politicians weren't tied directly to the capitalist class, how could they *not* be pressured by the tremendous wealth and power of the bosses. The government of the bosses doesn't stand above society; it never has. It was set up from the beginning to keep the ruling class in power and the oppressed class in their place.

The government in this society is run in the same way that the economy is run; it is a dictatorship of the capitalists. Elections, Congress, the Supreme Court, all these institutions set up the rules and procedures the capitalists follow to settle disputes among themselves. They need these institutions and rules so that decisions can be made for the ruling class as a whole without fierce power struggles breaking out between different factions, struggles that could weaken their hold over the people.

The fact that the government is a dictatorship of the capitalists doesn't mean that we have no rights at all. We do have some rights and freedoms, but these were won as concessions to our struggles, and we can only keep them by protecting them through continued struggle.

The politicians lie about this being a democracy so they can rule us more easily and cheaply. When there is mass opposition to the actions of the government, the politicians always shout, "You elected us. If you don't like what we're doing, elect somebody else four years from now." And this very often fools people into believing that the reason the government doesn't represent them is because they elected the wrong politicians. But when push comes to shove, it's clear who's really running the show. In New York City, for example, the bankers told the mayor how to run the city in the midst of a budget crisis and made it very clear that

if he didn't go along, there would be no money forthcoming. So much for voting—ten bankers have more votes than eight million New Yorkers!

When fooling the people doesn't work, they use violence: the cops, the FBI, the national guard, the courts, and the jails. Without violence backing them up, the capitalists couldn't rule.

A real democracy would be one where the majority, the working class, ruled. It would mean democratic control of the factories, mines, offices, and farms, with directors elected by the workers, from among the workers. The government would be an extension of this workers' control; it would coordinate and plan production to meet everyone's needs, as well as prevent the capitalists from getting back in power. Production quotas would be decided based on society's needs by meetings between workers at a workplace and government planners. Laws would be proposed at similar meetings.

The only way such a democracy could be successful is if the power of the capitalists is destroyed. As long as the former bosses refuse to get honest jobs and accept the workers' democracy, they must be kept under a dictatorship of the working class. But once everyone belongs to the working class, the violent institutions of the police, courts, and jails won't be needed anymore, and will be done away with forever.



Dialectical Materialism

All of our lives we have been told that selfishness and greed are the fundamental driving forces of human nature. According to this story, all of history has been the same greedy struggle, with the only differences being the names of the rulers and the types of weapons their armies used. We are told from the time we start first grade that we can never change human nature or society. The only options open for finding happiness, according to this theory, is to cheat other people to get rich, or else "rise above the material world" through some type of religion or mysticism.

But neither getting rich (an almost impossible task these days anyway) or learning to love your poverty are ways to solve the problems of society. We say that society hasn't always been the same, greed isn't part of human nature—and we can prove it! Society can and will be changed for the better, and we can prove that also, by using the most scientific method of thinking, dialectical materialism.

"You can't use science when you're trying to solve the problems of society, because human nature is irrational and unpredictable," one might say.

People are not so irrational and unpredictable as the bosses want us to believe. Although people have millions of different

thoughts and ideas, these ideas didn't pop into their heads the minute they were born. The millions of different ideas people have are the reflections of the millions of different things, events, conditions, and experiences they have in the real world.

What does dialectical materialism mean?

Let's begin with dialectics. Dialectics has shown that all things are in a constant state of change; nothing is eternal; everything comes into existence, develops, and changes or dies. The family, the "Great American Way of Life," your health, and even the shapes of the continents don't stay the same; they are going through continual changes as a result of interaction and conflict with the things around them. These changes don't happen smoothly. Many small hidden changes add up until the thing in question is no longer what it was before; has become something different. This is called the change from quantity to quality.

For example, if you don't take care of your health for a period of time, you may not notice anything different until . . . one day you wake up sick. Another example: when heat is applied to water it absorbs the heat, remaining water until at a certain point—212° F—it can't contain the heat in its present form and the water begins to boil and starts to turn to steam. Although each process has its own laws and characteristics, all changes generally follow this pattern of quantity turning into quality. This can be proven by unlimited examples.

Materialism means that all thoughts are the reflections of the real, material world. This is in direct contradiction to the idealists' notion that the outside world is only the reflection of peoples' thoughts. I see the flower because the flower exists. The flower doesn't exist just because I see it (as the idealists would have us believe). Materialism is confused in many people's minds with concern for only one's own individual well-being. That isn't materialism, that's greed.

By bringing together dialectics and materialism, Marxists have been able to show how and why societies change; dialectical materialism shows that people's characters, ideas, and actions are shaped by the conditions in the world around them. And most important, it shows that capitalism, like everything else has a birth, development, and death. We will use this knowledge as a weapon to smash capitalism and abolish inequality forever.



Reformism

Throughout the history of capitalism, the workers have had leaders who have guided the struggles that won the few basic rights we have today, the 8-hour day, the right to unionize, an end to child labor.

We can generally divide the leaders who have fought for these things into two main groups: reformists and revolutionaries.

A reformist tries to improve and reform the living conditions for the workers within the capitalist system (trying to make the system more "humanitarian"), while the revolutionary fights for the same reforms as part of the larger struggle to smash capitalism. And that revolutionary struggle, incidentally, has always been the best way to get "reforms."

The reformists, who often sincerely sympathize with the workers, don't understand the real cause of the exploitation and misery of the working class. They generally believe that the crimes of capitalism are just a tragic misunderstanding, and if only the bosses could be made to realize the suffering they are causing, things could change.

Reformists take the capitalist system for granted, believing that the system can be made more human but can't be basically

changed. Because of this outlook they are forced to limit their demands to ones that don't challenge the bosses' rule.

"Of course you need a raise, but if you ask for too much, how is the company going to make money?" How many times the workers have been forced to dance to that awful tune!

Typical of a reformist is a person like Ralph Nader. After exposing in detail the lying, criminal practices of the auto industry and other industries to the whole country, what does he propose to do?

Lobby to get laws passed that would break up the monopolies and bring back the good old days of free competition!

There are two reasons why this is a joke: first, capitalism naturally tends toward monopoly and monopolies have dominated the system since before World War I. Second, the monopolies have also dominated the politicians and now dominate them more than ever.

Revolutionaries are the most militant fighters for improvements in the standard of living and for defending the rights of workers, the poor, and the oppressed under capitalism.

We strive to lead the struggle in the trade unions, tenant groups, consumer groups, organizations of welfare recipients and unemployed workers, groups fighting high food prices.

While reformists are not the class enemy and often win supporters because of their legitimate struggle with the bosses, they are unable to consciously lead a struggle against capitalism because they themselves believe in it. By not showing the workers who their real enemy is, the reformist way of thinking helps capitalism to continue and to oppress the workers even more effectively.

But we lead these struggles with a view to enlarging them, deepening them, and with the aim of getting into a still greater struggle to overthrow the whole rotten, oppressive system.



The Labor Bureaucracy

Sometimes they get paid as much as a boss. They wheel and deal with the politicians in the back rooms like a boss. When it comes time to call a strike, sometimes you think you're listening to the boss. They wear fancy suits, smoke big fat cigars, and ride in Cadillacs.

But are the labor bureaucrats the same as bosses?

The bureaucrats depend on the existence of the unions for their jobs, and so are forced to fight the bosses enough to keep the unions intact. Like it or not, bureaucrats are caught between the workers and the bosses. On the one hand, they want to keep the workers quiet, because the more active and organized the workers are against the bosses, the more they have the power to take away the bureaucrats' privileges. On the other hand, the bureaucrats can't work completely for the bosses, because the bosses don't want them. In fact, the bosses don't want the workers organized at all, even if they can control what the union does. Even buying the bureaucrats off costs money.

The bureaucrats often take the bosses' side. They may hold the union back, stop it from organizing new workers, and support the bosses' imperialist wars. A famous American socialist even went as far as to call them "the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class."

How did these fat cats get control of the unions, which were born out of the bitter struggles of the workers for their basic rights?

The main reason they were able to gain control was by winning support from the more privileged and skilled workers. The bureaucrats, most of whom came from this part of the working class which we call the labor aristocracy, took the extra money and privileges that the ruling class had to offer as a result of the super-profits they had made from imperialism. They used the unions to defend these privileges before anything else. So, indirectly the ruling class was able to buy off a part of the workers, and out of this conservative group came such sellouts as George Meany, a former union plumber, and Peter Brennan, a former well-paid construction worker.

Still, without the unions the bureaucrats are nothing. With the growing economic crisis, the pressure is on them to act. And if they want to keep their jobs, they're going to have to fight the bosses. Because if they can't keep up with the struggle of the rank and file, they're going to be waiting on the unemployment lines just like everybody else!



Fascism

Fascism is a movement initiated by big business, designed to smash all working class organizations—both political parties and trade unions—drive wages down to subsistence levels, wipe out all social legislation, destroy all democratic institutions, and keep the capitalist class in power.

It is the last resort of the ruling class, coming into being at times when the economic foundations of its rule are crumbling; when the middle class is fearful of losing everything, ready to follow a “savior”; when the working class is fragmented, unsure of its own resources, or defeated in a bid for power.

Fascism turns the poor against the poor, appealing to the most backward sentiments of the masses and creating a scapegoat to divert attention away from the economic crisis it cannot overcome. Hitler’s outstanding scapegoat was the Jewish people. He made a triple amalgam—Communists, Jews, bankers—all Communists were Jews, all Jews were rich. What he did not tell the masses was that he was backed by the richest bankers and industrialists in Germany.

Although fascism has no connection with the socialist movement Hitler called his political organization the “National Socialist Party,” knowing that 13 million Germans voted Com-

munist or Socialist. He succeeded in deceiving a large section of the masses into believing that he would bring them the benefits of socialism.

Classical fascism triumphed only in Europe—in Italy, Germany, and Franco’s Spain, though Franco’s regime came nearer to being a naked military dictatorship, since it did not have the massive popular support the fascist regimes had in the other two states.

But that was 40 years ago. The meaning of words changes along with changing experiences. Today in the U.S., many Black and Latin people and those of every other oppressed minority feel that fascism is here and now. They feel discrimination every day of their lives, and police brutality is an ever-present danger. Their concern is not with the scientific definition of classical fascism. The torment they suffer is fascism enough for them.

Although the Chilean junta is not simon-pure fascism—its mass support is fabricated and much of it paid for by the CIA—we refer to its rule in Chile as a fascist state in deference to the modern understanding of that term.

There is still the possibility of a mass-supported fascist movement rising in the U.S. George Wallace and other yet unknown demagogues willing to front for the capitalist class in the name of “the common man” may be able to lead the ignorant, the desperate—those workers lacking any class consciousness or experience of struggle—and the economically ruined lower middle class down the fascist road.

But the American working class is not in a defeated position. On the contrary, it has barely begun to fight. Its potential power is tremendous.

There is every reason to believe that American workers, forewarned by the bitter experiences of Italian, German, and Spanish workers, will ruthlessly crush the fascist serpent if it rears its head.



Revolution

The sexual revolution. A revolution in banking. A revolutionary product from Proctor and Gamble. . . .

The ad men on Madison Avenue would like us to think they have a corner on revolution. In fact, they and the corporations behind them would like nothing more than to distort what a real revolution is.

What do we mean by revolution?

All real social revolutions are the overthrow of one class by another. This overthrow comes when the old social and economic relations between people become intolerable and hold society as a whole back. The revolution itself sets free new advanced social relations and marks the beginning of a whole new economic system.

Revolutions are of necessity violent. No class that has the power has ever given it up without a struggle. Even if the revolutionary class does not want violence, it must be prepared to resort to force or be crushed mercilessly, because the old class rule is based on organized violence of the police and the army.

All changes of class rule in recorded history have come about by revolution. The "Glorious Revolution" of Cromwell in England and the French Revolution are both examples of the

capitalist class taking power in England and France. These revolutions and others like them gave tremendous impetus to the development of modern industry and carried society further than it had ever been.

Now, however, after centuries of rule by the capitalist class, capitalism itself is holding back production and is making life increasingly unbearable, promising only wars and depression. Especially with the advent of imperialism, which has ruthlessly blocked the development of entire nations and which is responsible for tremendous misery and starvation in much of the world, a new social and economic system is inevitably on the order of the day.

Now the revolutionary class is the workers of the world, who have led other exploited classes in taking power in the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, Cuba, Vietnam, Korea, and elsewhere.

Yet all revolutionary struggles have not been victorious. A tragic example is Chile. There the fascist coup showed that the workers' revolution cannot be elected to power. The working class cannot rely on the old state mechanism developed to serve capitalism, but must create its own instruments of power to carry through the revolution. To be capable of doing this, the working class needs a party which understands its role in history and is more organized than the capitalists. Moreover, this party must be able to move decisively when a revolutionary situation presents itself. Only in this way can the workers come to power.

All through recorded history the exploited masses have been struggling in one way or another for liberation from their misery, but have not been able to rule society. As a result, every revolution until the present period has delivered power into the hands of a class representing a minority of exploiters. But modern technology means for the first time that the producers can also run society and the cultural institutions.

With the final victory of the workers' revolution throughout the entire world, the power will be taken by the majority from a minority, ending once and for all the basis for exploitation.



Socialism

Socialism is a system in which the working class of the world takes control of the means of production and the distribution and exchange of goods. Socialism organizes the means of production according to a plan based on what resources are available and what society as a whole needs. By planning production this way, society will finally be free from the irrational cycle of capitalist crises—like the one we find ourselves in today.

Increasing production under socialism will mean more for everybody; whereas under capitalism increased production can lead to a depression, because the bosses won't sell their goods if they can't make a profit. Inflation will be eliminated under socialism because prices will be set according to the socialist plan and there will be no need to raise them to increase profits.

Unemployment will be eliminated because everyone's full potential will be put to work to improve life for all of society. Automation, instead of being used to lay off workers and increase exploitation, will be used to free workers from monotonous and unhealthy work. The technology already exists to automate the digging of coal, all welding, all foundry work, and all machine shop production work. No longer would thousands of workers spend all day over a grinder or welding rod or drill press.

Increased efficiency will mean more free time for everyone, instead of harder work for some and unemployment for others. Workers will have the time and energy for education and enjoyment of art, music, and plays, the things only the privileged enjoy now.

Through socialism, the terrible inequality between the imperialist nations and the oppressed nations will be overcome, with the resources of former imperialist countries put at the disposal of the oppressed nations. No longer will one nation exploit another. When all the traces of the terrible heritage of imperialism are eliminated, the working class of the world can rid itself of outmoded national divisions.

Through planned communities, the need for division between the city and the countryside will be ended. Agricultural work will be the same as any other job and farmworkers won't be deprived of the advanced culture of the cities.

Every worker will have a say in the running of their workplace, their neighborhood, their children's school, their medical facilities, and the entire government. This democratic involvement in every aspect of life as well as the availability of education to everyone, will break down the division between intellectual and physical work. No longer will thinking be the work of the privileged alone.

Thirty-five percent of the people of the world already live in countries where the working class has seized power and is building socialism. Through socialist planned production these countries, such as Soviet Union, China, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, have turned what were the most backward, oppressed countries into highly industrialized, advanced societies. Once the working class has taken power all over the world, the building of socialism can be completed.

Under socialism, the world would open to everyone the possibility of developing their true potential. As Friedrich Engels said, "The history of humanity will truly begin."

Literature from World View

Expanding Empire *by Vince Copeland*

What exactly are the forces in the U.S. which generate coups, assassinations, and bloodbaths in the far and near corners of the earth? This pamphlet shows how big business cannot be reformed because it is bound by its own inexorable law—expand or die. 68 pp., 75¢

China: The Struggle Within *by Sam Marcy, Deirdre Griswold, and Naomi Cohen*

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Albizu Campos and the Ponce Massacre *by Juan Antonio Corretjer*

President Ford's last-minute attempt at forcing statehood on Puerto Rico is effectively rebutted by this vivid portrayal of a crucial period in the heroic struggle for nationhood for this oppressed country. Written by a comrade of Albizu Campos, the great leader of the Nationalist Party. 25 pp., 35¢

Portugal: Revolutionary Developments, April 1974-December 1975 *by Sam Marcy*

The world-shaking events which took place in Portugal during this period contain many lessons for revolutionaries—particularly on the role of the military. 40 pp (8½ x 11), 50¢

The Class Character of the USSR *By Sam Marcy*

This recently published pamphlet provides an answer to the theory of "Soviet social-imperialism," and includes an appraisal of the history of the USSR-China relations by Vince Copeland. The booklet contains a Marxist analysis that shows why the USSR could not have become "imperialist" without a violent counter-revolution. It documents the Chinese Communist Party positions from 1956 on and explains the roots of the false "super-power" theory. Marcy reviews China's initial revolutionary break from Soviet revisionism and discusses the course of the struggle between them. The need to defend all socialist countries against imperialism is stressed. 96 pp., \$1.00

Busing and Self-Determination *by Sam Marcy*

A clear and concise statement of the Marxist position on self-determination for all oppressed peoples; and an important contribution to the struggle against racism and the racist violence against children from Black and other oppressed communities seeking quality education through busing outside their community. 15 pp., 25¢

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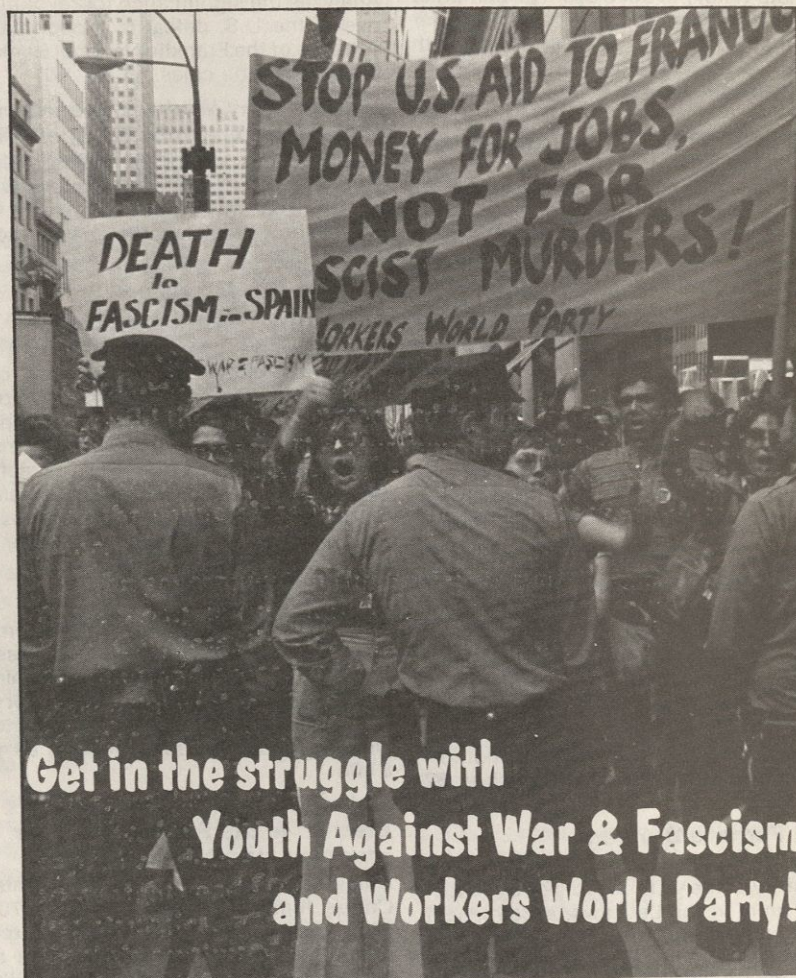
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